

Lower Elementary

WEEK1-STARTER



Activity Name: Big Story

What You Need: None needed

What You Do:

- Invite the kids to sit with you in a circle.
- Explain that you're going to tell one big story together, and everyone gets to be an author.
- Start the story with a simple opening line, for example: "Once upon a time, a brave squirrel decided to build the world's biggest treehouse."
- Then, point to the kid next to you and say, "What happened next?"
- Let that kid add one sentence to the story.
- Continue around the circle, with each kid adding their own sentence to build the narrative. Encourage kids to be creative and have fun.
- Play again with a new opening sentence and change the direction, this time letting the kid who added to the narrative last be the first one to start.

What You Say:

What a fantastic story we created together! It was so cool to see how everyone's small part added up to make one big story. Did you know that Jesus loved to tell stories too? Jesus told stories called parables. A parable is a short story using everyday objects and situations to help explain something about God and His kingdom. Jesus used everyday objects in His stories that people would be familiar with—like flour that you bake bread with and seeds! Let's go hear two of those stories now!

Lead your group to the Large Group area.



Bible Story: What Is God's Kingdom? The Stories of the Mustard Seed and the Yeast • *Matthew 13:31-34*

Bottom Line: Jesus shows us God's kingdom.

Conversation Starter: What is God's kingdom?

Monthly Memory Verse: *"May your kingdom come. May what you want to happen be done on earth as it is done in heaven."* • Matthew 6:10 NIV

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What is God's kingdom?
- Why did Jesus use simple things to teach about God's kingdom?
- How can faith grow, even when we cannot see it?
- What is one small thing you can do to help others?

Activity Name: Paper Parable

What You Need: Paper booklets coloring supplies (optional) mustard seeds

What You Say:

Today, we heard two short parables that Jesus told about God's kingdom, or the kingdom of heaven—one was about flour and yeast that you bake bread with, and the other was about these tiny mustard seeds.

These tiny mustard seeds grow into something huge! That's what Jesus said His kingdom is like. It starts small, but it grows big! Jesus' kingdom grows bigger and bigger the more and more people decide to follow Jesus as their friend and begin their forever friendship with Him.

God's kingdom started small with Jesus and a few friends, but it has grown to include people all over the world! **[Bottom Line] Jesus shows us God's kingdom can start small and become something bigger than we could ever imagine.**

What You Do:

- Explain what a parable is: *A parable is a short story using everyday objects and situations to help explain something about God and His kingdom.*
- Share that in today's Bible story, Jesus taught two parables to help us understand God's kingdom—one was about a mustard seed.
- Open your Bible to Matthew 13:31-32 and read the parable of the mustard seed.
- Show kids the mustard seeds.
- Explain that Jesus said the kingdom of God starts very small—like a mustard seed—but grows into something very big and wonderful.

- Tell the kids they get to be storytellers and create their very own parable storybook!
- Give each kid a "Paper Parable" Activity Page.
- Encourage them to recall details of the parables and draw a picture on the front of the cover, and then open their book to the different pages and draw their story.
- As they work, ask them about their drawings.

Close in prayer/Invite kids to pray.